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United States Department of Agriculture,
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,
Forage-Crop Investigations,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE YOKOHAMA VELVET BEAN (*Stizolobium hassjoo*).

The Yokohama velvet bean is an annual legume which makes its best growth during the summer, making a vine somewhat larger and more vigorous than does the common Lima or Sewee bean. It makes a more vigorous growth than do any of the cowpeas and so is of great value for planting on newly cleared land for mellowing the sod, and it is also an excellent restorative crop for soils which are in need of nitrogen and humus. The vines contain about the same proportion of nitrogen as do the cowpeas, so that a crop of 3 tons per acre will furnish as much nitrogen as will 1 ton of cottonseed meal and will also provide three times as much humus.

The Yokohama velvet bean grows well on soils too light and sandy for most other legumes. It will mature a heavy crop of seed in about one hundred days from planting, and so can be grown successfully as far north as South Carolina and Arkansas, while moderate crops have been matured as far north as Virginia and Missouri.

This bean makes excellent grazing for cattle and hogs from about August until the field is cleared or will make excellent hay if cut when the first pods ripen. If not cut for hay and if not grazed too closely, many of the plants will continue to grow and to produce seed until killed by frost, but usually that part of the crop matured later than September is of little value.

Seed should be planted at about the same time as cotton, and 1 bushel will plant 3 to 4 acres. The vines must be given a support, as is done for Lima beans, if a full crop of seed is to be secured. Poles give the best support, but cornstalks are nearly as good and are more commonly used. The corn should be planted as early as is safe and when about 2 feet high the beans planted between the hills and the crop given the cultivation which is usually given to corn. The crop may be used for grazing cattle and hogs during August and September, or both the vines and stalks cut to use as winter forage for cattle, or the corn and beans gathered for a grain feed while the vines are plowed under. The growth of the vine is not as heavy as that of either the Florida or the Lyon bean, but the yield of seed is larger, being from 35 to 50 bushels per acre from a fair growth of vine. It matures before either of the others are ready for grazing, and the fact that it can be gathered and the ground cleared in time to plow for oats or some other winter crop makes it especially valuable where early maturity with a heavy yield of seed and a moderate growth of vine are desired.

There are two other varieties of velvet beans, the Florida and the Lyon, which are quite common, but both are easily distinguished from the Yokohama, which has purple flowers and large flattened pods with light-gray seeds. The Florida velvet bean has purple flowers, cylindrical velvety pods, and nearly spherical seeds, which are dark, mottled brown or white in color, while the Lyon variety has white flowers, nearly smooth flattened pods, and seeds which are nearly white in color. Both the Florida and the Lyon varieties require at least 5 months for maturing, while the Yokohama bean will ripen well in a little more than 3 months.

S. M. TRACY.

FEBRUARY 7, 1912.

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